

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 111545Z MAR 76
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5010
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NY

S E C R E T CAPE TOWN 0254

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PFOR, RH, US, ZA, MZ
SUBJ: RECOMMENDED US ACTION ON RHODESIA

REFS: LUSAKA 556, MAPUTO 218

1. SUMMARY: WE AGREE WITH LUSAKA ON SERIOUSNESS OF RHODESIAN SITUATION BUT RECOMMEND SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT APPROACH THAT INCLUDES CLEAR PRIVATE WARNING TO SMITH WITH EFFORT TO PRE-EMPT SOVIET-CUBAN INVOLVEMENT BY RE-EMPHASIZING UN SANCTIONS EFFORT AND SUPPORTING MOZAMBIQUE IN APPLYING THOSE SANCTIONS AND STICKING TO ITS STATED INTENTION TO AVOID ANY FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN RHODESIA. END SUMMARY.

2. WE AGREE WITH LUSAKA THAT TIME IS RUNNING OUT FOR A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION IN RHODESIA. WE ALSO AGREE THAT WE

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SHOULD USE WHAT INFLUENCE WE HAVE (ADMITTEDLY LITTLE) TO

BRING ABOUT A PEACEFUL SOLUTION AND IF THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE AT LEAST TO KEEP THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS OUT OF THE RHODESIA STRUGGLE WHILE GUERRILLAS WEAR SMITH DOWN.

3. ANYTHING LESS THAN A POLICY DESIGNED TO FORCE SETTLEMENT ON SMITH WILL INEVITABLY BRING GREATER COMMUNIST INFLUENCE, IF NOT INTERVENTION, TO BEAR UPON THE SITUATION. THREATS TO BLOCK SOVIET OR CUBAN INTERVENTION WITHOUT SOME ACTION TO DEAL WITH WHAT THE AFRICANS REGARD AS AN INCREASINGLY INTOLERABLE SITUATION WILL ONLY SERVE TO INCREASE THE ATTRACTIVENESS TO AFRICANS OF THE COMMUNIST POSITION AND PREJUDICE LONG-TERM WESTERN INTERESTS.

4. OUR ASSESSMENT IS THAT SMITH IS PROBABLY ASSUMING THAT HE CAN HANDLE ANY GUERRILLA EFFORT THAT AFRICANS ARE LIKELY TO MOUNT WITH THEIR OWN MANPOWER RESOURCES AND IF SOVIET TECHNICIANS AND CUBAN TROOPS ENTER THE STRUGGLE ANGOLA-STYLE, BRITAIN, SOUTH AFRICA AND EVEN THE US WOULD COME TO HIS SUPPORT. SMITH IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE PLAYING BRINKMANSHIP UNTIL THE PRESSURE MOUNTS TO THE POINT WHERE HE SEES NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO AGREE TO MAJORITY RULE IN SHORT TERM OR STEP DOWN.

5. WE BELIEVE OUR STRATEGY SHOULD BE TO CONCENTRATE PRESSURE ON SMITH NOW IN A BID TO ACHIEVE A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN THE SHORT TERM WHILE AT THE SAME TIME TRYING TO ISOLATE RHODESIA FROM DIRECT SOVIET-CUBAN INTERVENTION REGARDLESS OF WHETHER A SOLUTION CAN BE REACHED OR GUERRILLA ACTION INTENSIFIES. OUR PREMISE IS THAT GUERRILLA WARFARE WITHOUT COMMUNIST MANPOWER MIGHT RESULT IN POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION IN WHICH COMMUNIST INFLUENCE CAN BE LIMITED WHEREAS DIRECT COMMUNIST MILITARY INTERVENTION WOULD INEVITABLY STRENGTHEN COMMUNIST ROLE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AS A WHOLE AND THREATEN FURTHER VIOLENT CONFLICT. TO BLOCK COMMUNIST INTERVENTION MEANS KEEPING CUBAN OR OTHER COMMUNIST COMBAT FORCES OUT OF MOZAMBIQUE.

6. SAMORA MACHEL HOLDS KEY TO KEEPING SOVIETS AND CUBANS OR OTHERS OUT OF MOZAMBIQUE. THE WAY TO ENCOURAGE HIM TO DO THIS IS TO MAKE MOZAMBIQUE THE KING PIN IN REINVIGORATED SANCTIONS POLICY, LAUDING MACHEL FOR HELPING MAKE SANCTIONS EFFECTIVE. WE SHOULD COORDINATE WITH BRITISH TO SUPPORT MOZAMBIKAN ECONOMY

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AND TO INSTITUTE ANY OTHER ACTIONS POSSIBLE TO WEAKEN SMITH. OUR OBJECTIVE SHOULD BE TO WEAKEN SMITH WITHOUT STRENGTHENING THE GUERRILLAS, IF POSSIBLE FORCING SITUATION CLOSER TO CONTROLLED STALEMATE IN WHICH RHODESIANS SEE THAT THEY CAN HOLD OUT NO LONGER AND SHOULD SETTLE FOR WHAT THEY CAN GET BEFORE THEY ARE FURTHER WEAKENED (OR GUERRILLAS STRENGTHENED) TO POINT OF DICTATED SETTLEMENT.

7. FOR THIS POLICY TO WORK, BOTH SIDES MUST SEE THAT SANCTIONS, OR THE BALANCE BETWEEN SANCTIONS AND RHODESIAN GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES, WILL INEXORABLY WEAKEN SMITH'S POSITION. THIS MAY REQUIRE SOUTH AFRICA BEING BROUGHT TO REALIZE THAT THE ONLY WORKABLE COURSE OPEN TO THEM TO KEEP SOVIET AND CUBAN FORCES OUT OF THE STRUGGLE (SINCE THE WEST WILL NOT GO TO WAR TO SAVE SMITH) IS TO COOPERATE AT LEAST PASSIVELY IN THE WESTERN PLAN TO WEAKEN SMITH. TO RETAIN MACHEL'S COOPERATION ON THE OTHER HAND, HE TOO MUST BE CONVINCED THAT THE WEST IS DETERMINED TO FORCE SMITH TO GIVE IN TO MAJORITY RULE.

8. ACTION RECOMMENDED: TO IMPLEMENT THE FOREGOING STRATEGY, WE RECOMMEND FOR THE DEPARTMENT'S CONSIDERATION THE FOLLOWING SPECIFIC STEPS:

A. A PRIVATE MESSAGE TO SMITH MAKING IT UNMISTAKABLY CLEAR THAT RECENT STATEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY AND PRESIDENT REGARDING SOVIET-CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN RHODESIA SHOULD NOT BE MISREAD AS OFFERING AN EVENTUAL PROMISE OF SUPPORT IF CUBAN TROOPS AND RUSSIAN ADVISERS BEGIN TRAINING, AND PERHAPS FIGHTING, ALONGSIDE ZIMBABWE FORCES. THE DEPARTMENT MAY HAVE A VARIETY OF CHANNELS FOR CONVEYING SUCH A MESSAGE. IT MAY WISH TO CONSIDER DELIVERING IT THROUGH THIS MISSION TO AIR VICE-MARSHALL HAWKINS, THE ACCREDITED DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVE OF RHODESIA IN SOUTH AFRICA, WHO HAS DIRECT ACCESS TO SMITH AND IS HEAVILY ENGAGED IN SAG'S EFFORTS TO PERSUADE SMITH TO AGREE TO A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT.

B. MAKE A NEW CONCERTED PUBLIC EFFORT TO REPEAL THE BYRD AMENDMENT, OR ALTERNATIVELY TO PERUSUADE AMERICAN CONSUMERS OF RHODESIAN CHROME TO DISCONTINUE PURCHASES. THIS WOULD REINFORCE THE MESSAGE TO SMITH THAT WE ARE NOT GOING TO BAIL HIM OUT AND STRENGTHEN OUR HAND WITH MACHEL BY DEMONSTRATING
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OUR EARNESTNESS.

C. INFORM MACHEL THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO SUPPORT FULL IMPL-
.3,5-589, OF UN SANCTIONS AGAINST RHODESIA AND SANCTIONS OFFSET FOR MOZAMBIQUE, HAVING NOTED CHISSANO'S ASSURANCES TO CHARGE THAT THERE ARE NO FOREIGN TROOPS FIGHTING IN THE RHODESIAN CONFLICT AND THERE WOULD BE NONE IN THE FUTURE AND ASSUMING THAT THERE WILL BE NO DEVIATION FROM THIS POLICY.

D. INFORM VORSTER OF THE STEPS WE HAVE TAKEN AND ASK HIM TO INCREASE HIS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PRESSURES TO PERSUADE SMITH THAT FURTHER RESISTANCE TO A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IS FUTILE AND HE HAS NO REALISTIC ALTERNATIVE THAN REACHING AGREEMENT OR STEPPING ASIDE FOR SOMEONE WHO WILL.

9. TO SUPPLEMENT THE FOREGOING STEPS, THERE MAY BE MEASURES WHICH ZAMBIA AND THE UK COULD TAKE TO INCREASE THE PRESSURE ON SMITH. EMBASSIES LUSAKA AND LONDON ARE IN BETTER POSITION TO SUGGEST WHAT THESE MAY BE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, POLICIES, SPHERE OF INFLUENCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976CAPET00254
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X3
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760092-0940
From: CAPE TOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760373/aaaacqz.tel
Line Count: 174
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 76 LUSAKA 556, 76 MAPUTO 218
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: BoyleJA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 20 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 APR 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <17 AUG 2004 by BoyleJA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RECOMMENDED US ACTION ON RHODESIA
TAGS: PFOR, RH, US, ZA, MZ
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006